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Fall 2012

## U ST 205 Final Narrative

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### Recommended Citation

Kise, Timothy L., "U ST 205 Final Narrative" (2012). *Carver Academy Student Narratives*. 23.  
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## U ST 205 Final Narrative

By Tim Kise

My time since I first arrived here at Iowa State has been filled with both hardships and great experiences that I'll never forget. From late nights studying to putting in extra time researching to meeting unforgettable friends, the time I've spent here has been more worthwhile and life changing than I could have ever imagined. My journey here started late on August 19, 2011. Getting to Iowa State was an ordeal in itself. I'm from Madison, Wisconsin, which is a little over 4 hours away by car, so it only made sense for my mom to drive. Unfortunately, about half way through the drive, our van's transmission died and we had to call a tow truck to take us to the nearest dealership. Since this is Iowa, that happened to be almost an hour away. Forced to wait for rental car, what started out as roughly a 5 hour trip turned out to be closer to 8. Finally arriving at Lyon Harwood in Old Richardson Court quite late at night and after everyone else had already moved in, I saw my room and met my roommate for the first time.

His name is William Robin Lindemann VI or Robin for short. I found him standing right outside what was then my room at a little bit above 6 foot. Little did I know he would become one of the best friends I've made so far at Iowa State. Needless to say, we got along great. He was here for chemical engineering, I was still undeclared. Lucky for us, we had almost all of our first semester classes together, and what I didn't have with him, I had with Shana. Shana was a chemical engineer who lived on the floor above me in Harwood. Between Robin and her, I had found the two of my best friends and the two people I still spend most of my time with.

First semester in general was a really big transition for me. In high school, all of my time seemed to be filled for me and the routine was almost cookie cutter. I woke up and went to school, after school I ran, I went home to eat and do homework, and then I either hung around my house, with friends, or just went to bed. It was a normal life and it kept me happy. When I showed up to college though, I had to find things to fill my time. Classes and studying were a big part of my life, but I wasn't running as much and I didn't have any other extra-curricular activities at the start. I'm a person that constantly has to be busy and starting off fresh in college, I wasn't. I didn't feel involved enough, like I wasn't going to be able to achieve all that I felt I was capable of and that scared me. It scared me so much to the point where I was losing sleep and almost had an anxiety attack. I couldn't handle not being involved, so one really early morning when I couldn't sleep I got up and out of bed and spent the next several hours researching clubs and other things around campus that I could join to help me become involved and sane. It was a rough point in my life, but I really think that it was a good turning around point and it gave me a lot of appreciation and insight as to just how much college and Iowa State University have to offer.

Dorm life was another thing that took some getting used to. Luckily, I had the best roommate anyone could ever ask for and got along really well with everyone on my floor, but it was hard having to fend for myself all the time. Living in a dorm is basically like living out of your room, and instead of walking out into the rest of your house, you're walking out into an area with a bunch of other people and friends your age. It was awesome. Being apart from my mom and two little brothers made me sad from time to time, but all in all I'd say that living in the dorms is one of the most fun experiences I've ever had. Every day was a new bonding

experience. Yes there were classes and yes there was homework and oh my goodness yes there was studying, but apart from all of that, it was all just a chance to hang out, meet new people and start developing life-long friendships.

Academics weren't that much different for me, or at least the transition was easy. All throughout school I've been advanced in mathematics, and during the second half of high school, I was taking math classes at the University of Wisconsin Madison. Having this previous experience with college classes allowed me to know what to expect when I was taking college classes full-time. I definitely studied more than I did in high school, but all-in-all the transition was quite smooth.

The last big transition that took place when I came to college was refocusing my goals for the future. For the entirety of my life before college, I was focused on getting good grades and working hard so that I could get into and afford college. I had completed that goal. I had made it. Now it was time to focus on after college and start preparing for the real world and finding a job. The processes were similar yet completely different. I had built my resume up all throughout high school and now I had to start again from scratch. Once you're in college, nobody cares what you did in high school, and that goes for employers as well. Instead of researching colleges and programs of study, I needed to be researching companies and looking at what exactly I wanted to be doing with my life. My goal was always to be a biomechanical engineer for the US Olympic committee, working with high performance athletes.

Biomechanical engineers focus on movement efficiency as it pertains to life, or in this case, humans. I've always loved the idea and concept of engineering and I've always been really into running and other sports, so what better way to combine these two central aspects of my life

than as a biomechanical engineer. I still have this goal on the back-burner of my mind, but I'm in college. I think it's important to explore new things, so although I still want to become a biomechanical engineer, I've also taken an interest in working at a manufacturing plant as a mechanical engineer.

Second semester was very similar to first semester. Same people, same place, different classes. I did have to say goodbye to some friends who left for study abroad options, but other than that it was a lot of the same fun and experiences from first semester. The next big transition took place at the turn of this year, when I moved into my fraternity. I had always told myself that if I didn't join an athletic team when I came to college, I would join a fraternity. I know that I'm the type of person that needs a group of guys to hang out with, and if I wasn't getting that from a sports team, I felt that the next best place would be a fraternity. Not only do I get to be with a group of guys, but I get to stay involved in the community and around campus, and meet a lot of new people through the Greek system.

Life in my fraternity house is quite different from life in the dorms. I've gained a new appreciation for the library due to the increase in noise, and it's harder not being able to go grab a meal bundle or walk to the C-store and use dining dollars whenever I want, but it's completely worth it. The other men in my house are great and the support network there is fantastic. We have our troubles and differences, but we know that when it comes to it we all have each other's back. From socials to community service events, from Greek Week to Homecoming and back, these guys are some of my closest and best friends and I couldn't imagine my college experience without a single one of them. I've had such a fun time and

developed so much as a person, that I would recommend Greek life to anyone with any form of interest level.

My past transitions to and from the dorms, with involvement, academics and refocusing my goals, I have been through many huge transitions so far in my college experience, with the next one right around the corner. Over this past semester, I was offered an opportunity to co-op with Valero at their ethanol plant in Fort Dodge, IA. What this means is that I will be on an extended internship working full-time for Valero as a mechanical engineer over this upcoming summer through the middle of December. It might not be easy along the way, in fact I don't expect it to be, but I can't wait for it. Just as I have with all previous transitions, I will take this one in stride and do my best to make the most out of what I have.

Each step of our life helps us prepare for the next one. From elementary school to middle school to high school to college and beyond, we are constantly developing who we are and growing as individuals. The transitions I've been through haven't always been simple, actually most of them have been quite difficult. Then again, nobody ever said that it would be easy, they only said that it would be worth it.